

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4876

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, RP
SUBJ: FAREWELL CALL ON MARCOSES

REF: STATE 064496

1. MRS. NEWSOM AND I PAID FAREWELL CALL ON PRESIDENT AND MRS. MARCOS ON MARCH 24.

2. BULK OF CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT RELATED TO BASE TALKS (REPORTED SEPARATELY) AND TO U.S. ROLE IN PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT. ON THIS, MARCOS SAID, U.S. HAD MADE SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO PHILIPPINES IN THREE WAYS: THROUGH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM WHICH AMERICAN ESTABLISHED, THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT LOS BANOS, AND THROUGH RURAL ELECTRIFICATION. EACH HAD NOT ONLY DONE MUCH FOR THE FILIPINO PEOPLE, BUT HAD ENABLED THE PHILIPPINES TO ASSIST OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE AREA AS WELL. ON RURAL ELECTRIFICATION, HE PARTICULARLY PRAISED THE FORESIGHT AND EFFORT OF THOMAS NIBLOCK (FORMER USAID DIRECTOR IN PHILIPPINES NOW IN INDONESIA.)

3. I DID TAKE OCCASION RAISE WITH MRS. MARCOS QUESTION OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN ELECTIONS, ASSURING HER THAT WE WERE NOT INVOLVED, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS PART OF MY TASK TO CONVEY TO PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT CERTAIN PERCEPTIONS OF PHILIPPINES
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HELD IN IMPORTANT CIRCLES IN U.S.

4. SHE RESPONDED BY MAKING IT CLEAR SHE FELT THERE WAS FOREIGN INTERVENTION, ALTHOUGH SHE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY SAY, "AMERICAN." SHE REFERRED TO FUNDS WHICH TRINIDAD HERRERA SEEMED TO BE GETTING, IMPLYING, IT WAS FROM OUTSIDE. SHE MENTIONED INTEREST ABROAD IN AQUINO, AND SUBSEQUENTLY IN

CONVERSATION WITH MRS. NEWSOM CONTINUED AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT HOW DANGEROUS AQUINO IS. SHE CLEARLY REFLECTED VIEW THAT ELECTIONS WERE UNNECESSARY AND DIVISIVE AND ARE BEING CONDUCTED AS RESULT OF FOREIGN PRESSURE. SHE HAD OBVIOUSLY READ AND WAS ANGERED BY FAVORABLE ARTICLE ON AQUINO IN ASIAN WAL STREET JOURNAL MARCH 22.

5. I ASKED MRS. MARCOS WHETHER SHE FELT AQUINO REPRESENTED A GREATER PROBLEM FOR THEM IN DETENTION OR OUTSIDE. SHE RESPONDE THAT HE REPRESENTED A GREATER PROBLEM IN DETENTION, BUT THAT FOR MARCOS TO RELEASE HIM WOULD SUBJECT THE PRESIDENT TO CHARGES HE WAS A "TYRANT" BECAUSE HE WOULD BE OVERRIDING THE JUDICAL PROCESSES.

6. COMMENT: PRESIDENT AND MRS. MRACOS WERE BOTH CORDIAL, BUT IT WAS CLEAR LATTER CAN SCARCELY CONTAIN HER BITTERNESS AT WHAT SHE CONSIDER U.S. INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF AQUINO AND HUMAN RIGHTS, AND AT WHAT SHE CONSIDERS LACK OF OFFICIAL AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING OF HER AND OF HER HUSBAND. SHE OBVIOUSLY FELT THERE WOULD BE "NEW LEAF" TURNED OVER AFTER HER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER, BUT FEELS OUR POSTURE SINCE THEN HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTING. IF THERE IS TROUBLE AS A RESULT OF ELECTIONS, SHE WILL BE INCLINED TO BLAME US. HER SOLUTION WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE FOR US TO PAY ATTENTION ONLY TO THE MARCOS CAMP. I DO NOT FEEL THIS WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE BROAD BASED POLICY WE MUST PURSUE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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THE PHILIPPINES.

7. BASICALLY, PRESIDENT MARCOS PROBABLY AGREES WITH HIS WIFE, BUT HE IS MORE RESTRAINED AND SEES BROADER INTERESTS. NEVERTHELESS, WE SHOULD HAVE NO ILLUSIONS THAT, GIVEN U.S. MEDIA ATTITUDES AND OUR OFFICIAL APPROACHES ON BEHALF OF DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES AND AQUINO, THIS BASIC FEELING THAT THERE HAVE BEEN UNWARRANTED OUTSIDE PRESSURES WILL BE ELIMINATED.
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